

Opposing The Detrimental Trade Policies Included In The Trans-Pacific Partnership Free Trade Agreement

Referred to: The Economic Development, Tourism, Housing, Planning and Transit Committee (Chairman Maloney and Legislators Berky, Delaune, Lapp, Litts, Maio and Rodriguez)

Legislators Manna Jo Greene and Tracey Bartels offer the following:

WHEREAS, the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) is a trade agreement that has been negotiated among the United States and 12 or more Pacific Rim countries, without consultation with our elected officials, but in consultation with many transnational corporations that will benefit from its rules; and

WHEREAS, U.S. trade deals for the past 25 years have been corporate-driven, incorporating rules that skew benefits to economic elites, resulting in working families bearing the brunt of such policies; and

WHEREAS, the growing trade deficits, driven by the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), China's accession to the World Trade Organization, and the U.S.-Korea Free Trade Agreement, have displaced 700,000 jobs and 3.2 million jobs, and 75,000 jobs respectively; and

WHEREAS, U.S. employment in manufacturing dropped by 5 million from 2000 to 2015; and

WHEREAS, jobs lost due to trade devastate families and entire communities and can permanently reduce lifetime earnings for hundreds of thousands of workers; and

WHEREAS, the long decline of the American manufacturing base exacerbated by bad trade policies that reward outsourcing has undermined our economic security and poses a direct threat to our national security; and

WHEREAS, the proposed TPP free trade agreement would compromise the high standards of environmental protection incorporated in US federal, state and local laws by allowing unrestricted trade with partners who are not required to achieve this same level of protection; and

WHEREAS, the offshoring of manufacturing increases global air and sea transport thereby adding to the carbon footprint of imported goods and increasing greenhouse gas emissions, leading to further global warming and extreme weather, and

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WHEREAS, the disproportionate voice of powerful United States and multinational global corporations in the formation of U.S. “free trade” agreements has advanced an agenda that undermines human rights, environmental protection, the public interest and threatens democracy at all levels of government; and

WHEREAS, under NAFTA-style trade rules, the U.S. annual trade deficit has increased dramatically from 70 billion in 1993, the year before NAFTA went into effect, to more than \$508 billion in 2014; and

WHEREAS, the TPP Free Trade Agreement is likely to include provisions lacking in monopoly protections for expensive specialty drugs called biologics and constrict the government's ability to limit spending on drugs, potentially increasing drug costs for the government and all Americans; and

WHEREAS, given the enactment of fast track trade negotiating authority, states, localities, and their citizens have no opportunity to correct shortcomings of the TPP text and Congress cannot follow normal Congressional procedure that permits full hearings and amendments but can only vote the agreement as presented up or down; and

WHEREAS, the TPP has been negotiated in secret, effectively shutting state and local governments out of the process, limiting our ability to influence its rules to ensure that the people of Ulster County can participate in the benefits of trade; and

WHEREAS, promoting economic growth with equity in Ulster County requires an approach that reforms the entire trade negotiation process to ensure that voices of workers, farmers, small businesses, families and communities are heard and their interests addressed; and

WHEREAS, the TPP would have direct, potentially undesirable consequences for our county, its residents, its local businesses, and its ecological systems on which all life depends; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, the Ulster County Legislature calls upon our federal elected officials, Senator Charles Schumer, Senator Kirsten Gillibrand, and Congressman Chris Gibson, to oppose the TPP and any similar trade deals if they fail to represent the needs and requirements of local and state municipalities, American public health interest, and U.S. agricultural industries; and, be it further

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RESOLVED, the Ulster County Legislature calls upon our elected officials in the U.S. Senate and U.S. House of Representatives to support new trade agreements only if they will:

- Protect and promote traditional state and local prerogatives and authority under our federal system, including by ensuring that states and localities will not be required to comply with certain commitments, including any restrictions on preferences for local, state, or U.S. goods or services, without prior informed consent of the legislature or local law making body;
- Ensure balanced trade and address the excessive, job-killing U.S. trade deficit;
- Include enforceable rules against currency manipulation, which countries such as China and Japan have used to tilt the playing field in their favor;
- Excluding investor-state dispute settlement (ISDS) and other provisions that favor foreign companies over domestic ones and undermine public choices;
- Protect the U.S. agricultural industry;
- Ensuring that countries cannot undercut U.S. based producers with weaker labor and environmental laws and enforcement;
- Ensuring that the U.S. will engage in robust enforcement of trade rules, including labor and environmental rules;
- Including strong rules to promote economic growth and job creation in the U.S.;
- Promoting high standards of protection for workers and workplaces, products, and natural resources rather than promoting a race to the bottom; and
- Putting the interests of people and the planet in the forefront of other issues; and be it further

RESOLVED, the Clerk of Legislature shall send copies of this resolution to our elected officials in the U.S. Senate and U.S. House of Representatives, President Barack H. Obama, Hon. Governor Andrew Cuomo, and the New York State Association of Counties (NYSAC),

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and move its adoption.

ADOPTED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES:

NOES:

Passed Committee: Economic Development, Tourism, Housing, Planning and Transit on _____.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

NONE